



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

T: 03459 33 55 77 or
08459 33 55 77
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Our ref: RFI 7285
Date: 25 March 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: SME SPEND AND TOTAL SPEND

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on 18 February 2015, about spend on goods and services directly purchased from small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). As you know we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked what amount the department has spent on goods and services directly purchased from SMEs in 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 and the total amount spent on goods and services.

On 25 February 2015, a document was published which provides data on central government direct and indirect spend with small and medium-sized enterprises in 2013/14. This includes spend data for all Whitehall Departments including Defra. The spend data relating to Defra includes the core Department as well as the Defra Network. The information can be found at the following link and includes 2011/12 and 2012/13 data:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/central-government-spend-with-smes-2013-to-2014>

We have not yet finalised validation of the 2014/15 spend data. When this is available it will be included on the same gov.uk website.

Section 22 of the FOIA allows us to withhold data that is intended for future publication unless it is in the public interest to publish earlier. We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of information concerning spend with small and medium sized enterprises and we want to be open and transparent on how our budget is spent. On the other hand, there is a strong public interest in withholding the information until it has been checked, verified and published alongside other departments' figures. Therefore, we have concluded that, bearing all circumstances in mind, the information should be withheld.

Defra's total spend on goods and services for the financial years requested are published in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts. These can be found at the following links:



2011/12

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69588/pb13805-defra-annual-report-2011-12.pdf (pages 117 and 118)

2012/13

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/224329/defra-year-end-accounts2012-13.pdf (pages 120 and 121)

2013/14

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/336100/defra-year-end-accounts-2013-14.pdf (pages 122 and 123)

Defra's Annual Report and Accounts for 2014/15 will not be produced until after 31 March 2015, but will be available on the gov.uk website when published in July 2015.

Section 22 of the FOIA allows us to withhold data that is intended for future publication unless it is in the public interest to publish earlier. We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of information concerning total spend and we want to be open and transparent on how our budget is spent. On the other hand, there is a strong public interest in withholding the information until it has been verified by independent auditors and published at a high level in the Annual Report and Accounts. Therefore, we have concluded that, bearing all circumstances in mind, the information should be withheld.

Please note that for all of the information provided above through links we have applied section 21 of the FOIA, which relates to information that is reasonably accessible to the requester by other means.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on www.gov.uk together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

I attach Annex A giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact the address below.

Yours sincerely,

██████████

Information Rights Team

InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to [REDACTED] Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF